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## Our Lady and St. Paul's Doctrine on Justification

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## OUR LADY AND ST. PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION

St. Paul presented his doctrine of justification in a style so personal, that his writings almost evolve into a spiritual diary. The Pauline letters remain a very individualistic register, an almanac of frustrations and strifes which lead to the triumph of Christ Jesus within Paul.<sup>1</sup> Paul's correspondence claims a place among the most honest self-revelatory literature in the world. The Apostle of the Gentiles lays bare his soul before the startled eyes of his readers. Paul, therefore, possessed the charism of proclaiming salvation by a public witness to what God was doing within himself.

It would be rash, even profane, to think that we can ever understand fully the mystery of this rich and mystic personality. Nonetheless, there is a far better chance to know Paul than there is to appreciate any other New Testament saint. We feel, therefore, an alluring temptation to fit the lives of other biblical personages into Paul's spiritual journey. We ask, therefore, if Paul's diary can help us to explore the secret of Mary's justification<sup>2</sup> and sanctification. Have we any right to think that

<sup>1</sup> Some of the latest studies separate the development of St. Paul's theology according to the three stages of his own personal life. See B. M. Ahern, *The Fellowship of his Sufferings*, in *New Horizons* (Notre Dame, Ind., 1963) 107-143, and with more technical apparatus in *CBQ* 22 (1960) 1-32; L. Cerfaux, *Christ in the Theology of St. Paul* (New York, 1959); D. M. Stanley, *Christ's Resurrection in Pauline Soteriology* (Rome, 1961).

<sup>2</sup> The term, "justification," is here understood in the thoroughly biblical sense of God's justice to Himself as a loving and forgiving Lord and His justice to His promises of redemption. "Justification," therefore, denotes the fulfillment of the divine promises, while growth in justification refers to a fulfillment ever more intense. The gradual removal of sin and its sad effects is usually but not necessarily implied. See the bibliographical notice in *Magister*, Bulletin of the Society of Catholic College Teachers of Sacred Doctrine, 7 (March 1963) 2-3. S. Lyonnet has written extensively

God led Mary along a path similar to the way of justification followed by Paul?

This paper inclines to an affirmative answer. Once upon a time, in the early preparation of this study, I had hoped to uncover traces of a literary dependence of Marian texts in the gospels upon the preaching of St. Paul. Luke's close contact with Paul in traveling, suffering and preaching made it seem inevitable that Luke would think and write under the impact of Paul's forceful personality. I judged Luke as I would a contemporary Christian who has loyally and persistently lived with the writings of St. Paul. A Pauline student can seldom shake off the apostle's profound influence. The fact remains, however, that Luke's infancy gospel is almost completely independent of Pauline influence.<sup>8</sup>

There are distinctive features, differentiating Pauline spirituality from the spiritual synthesis in Luke, John and other New Testament writers. The interpreter must respect these various methods of organization; he dares not overlook their particular points of emphasis and their specific centers of unity. Otherwise, he risks orphaning individual texts and passages from their parent stock. The evangelists, as the parents, must supply

on this aspect of Pauline theology; most readily available are his commentary *Les Epîtres de S. Paul aux Galates, aux Romains* (2nd ed., Rome, 1959) and his articles in *Wbp* 35 (1961) 281-287, *The Bridge* 4 (New York, 1962) 229-251, and his notes appended to a revised edition of J. Huby, *Saint Paul, Epître aux Romains* (2nd ed., Paris, 1957).

<sup>8</sup> Very different from Paul is Luke's handling of the servant theme (*Luke* 4:1-8), of the Good Samaritan, justified by works (*Luke* 10:29-37), and of the parable of the unprofitable servant (*Luke* 17:7-19). Luke is much more sympathetic towards the role of angels (*Luke* 1:11ff; 1:26; 2:9-15; *Acts* 1:10; 5:19; 8:26; 10:3); Paul, on the contrary, remains suspicious and considers angel-devotion an excessive reminder of Judaism (*Eph.* 6:12; *Col.* 2:15, 18). Luke also has a more kindly attitude towards the liturgy than Paul. While Paul argues strongly against the value and necessity of circumcision, Luke gives the rite an important place in the infancy narrative. The contact between Paul and Luke is opposed by R. Laurentin, *Structure et théologie de Luc 1-2* (Paris, 1957) 133-135; T. Maertens, *Le Messie est lui* (Bruges, 89; 1954) H. J. Cadbury, *The Making of Luke-Acts* (2nd ed., London, 1958) 275.

the context or life-situation of each gospel statement. There is no need to delay over this obvious and universally accepted procedure of biblical interpretation.

It is methodologically false, therefore, to pass impulsively from the theology of justification in St. Paul to the Marian texts in St. Luke and St. John. But can any contact, we ask, be established between these scriptural sources? Unfortunately, a literary dependence of Luke's infancy narrative upon Paul's preaching and writing must be excluded from our discussion. This fact is a hard blow at the possibilities of this present study, and that for several reasons. Paul, as it is being more and more generally admitted, never uprooted himself from his thorough grounding in rabbinical learning and practice. Chapters one and two of the third gospel, with their rich Marian doctrine, also move against a background heavily Jewish. How convenient it would be to associate Luke 1-2 with Paul's epistles!

This position is untenable, not only because it cannot be upheld by a comparative study of the ideas and the vocabulary in the two sections, but also because it would over-simplify both Judaism and Jewish Christianity, reducing each to a one party system! Luke one and two, the gospels of St. Matthew and St. John, the epistle to the Hebrews, as well as the Pauline epistles, are all intensely Jewish in tone and coloration, but they are also distinct, one from the other, in their peculiar style of combining traditionally Jewish elements.

Even though we admit that Luke, John and Paul each developed along specifically distinct lines—in their personal life as well as in their writings—still, we must not overlook the very obvious fact that all three were Christians! At the heart of their life pulsed the energizing presence of Jesus. From Jesus, risen to the right hand of the Father, each writer received the same Spirit, enabling him to live and think. In this one Spirit of Christ we acknowledge the common source of all apostolic Christianity and the *raison-d'être* for linking Luke's portrayal of Mary with Paul's doctrine of justification.

This study advances the somewhat perilous position that our meagre knowledge of Mary's justification and sanctification can be supplemented from Paul's elaborately described journey in faith. The following features of Pauline theology will be the basis for discussing Mary's growth in holiness:

1. Both Mary and Paul were devout Jews before the revelation of the Redeemer.
2. The initial revelation induced each to expect a glorious messianic renewal.
3. Salvation reaches the needy, who are not saved by their works but by their faith.
4. The experience of the cross deepens one's knowledge of salvation.
5. The universe will be transformed.

Our study will variously combine these progressive steps in Paul's theology and Mary's holiness.

### *1. Devout Jews Await the Promised One*

We will first investigate the Jewish background of Mary and Paul and its effect upon their Christian life. Because of her pre-eminent holiness one would expect Mary to have followed the Law and traditions of her people punctiliously and devoutly. Her kinswoman, Elizabeth, and Elizabeth's husband, Zachary, are described in terms which "insist upon their observance of the Law. . . . [They] are proclaimed to be just (*dikaioi*), and blameless (*amemptoi*), in all (*pasais*) the commandments (*dikaiōmasin*)."<sup>4</sup> The last phrase, "commandments and ordinances," reflects the spirituality of Deuteronomy (*Deut.* 6:1, 2, 17, 25; 7:11; 10:13). We will delay for a moment with this most important aspect of Mary's spiritual life.

Deuteronomy presents the clearest and most genuine insight into the Mosaic law. This book of the Old Testament rejects the legalism of external formality; it wants no part in watchdog authoritarianism. Deuteronomy insists upon the motivation

<sup>4</sup> T. Maertens, *op. cit.*, 9.

of love and responsibility. From Deuteronomy came the law which Jesus later canonized as "the greatest and the first commandments," namely, "You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart."<sup>5</sup> Deuteronomy consistently placed the commandments in the setting of God's merciful acts of salvation; obedience is thus transformed into personal gratitude. Chapter four is an extraordinarily rich source for studying the spirit of obedience. We read in part:

For love of your fathers he chose their descendants and personally led you out of Egypt by his great power. . . . This is why you must now know, . . . that the Lord is God, . . . and there is no other. You must keep his statutes and commandments . . . that you may have long life (*Deut.* 4:37-40).

Echoes of Deuteronomy are heard repeatedly in the infancy narrative of Luke, in the synoptic preaching of Jesus, and in the Acts of the Apostles. There is a chain reaction here which must be reduced to a point of origin. The Deuteronomic spirit extended beyond Mary and her blood relatives to the early apostolic Church. It is recognized that the first Christian community was governed by the promises and ideals of Deuteronomy.<sup>6</sup> The simplest explanation, and, therefore, the one with the strongest claim to authenticity, traces this pervasive Deuteronomic resonance of Jesus Himself. It is also very probable that Jesus received His own, special veneration for Deuteronomy from Mary and her relatives.

Mary and Joseph faithfully observed the Law: circumcising the boy Jesus on the eighth day (*Lev.* 12:3); offering a sacrifice of two turtledoves or two young pigeons to redeem their first-born male child (*Lev.* 12:8); submitting to the rite of purification (*Lev.* 12:2-6); going up to Jerusalem at the feast

<sup>5</sup> *Matt.* 22:38, 37; *Luke* 10: 25-27; *Deut.* 6:5.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. D. M. Stanley, *op. cit.*, 23-38; *id.*, *Conception of Salvation in Primitive Christian Preaching*, in *CBQ* 18 (1956) 231-254; J. Schmitt, *L'Eglise de Jérusalem ou la Restauration de l'Israël d'après Act 1-5*, in *RvSR* 27 (1953) 209-218; T. Maertens, *op. cit.*, 57-58.

of the Passover (*Ex.* 23:15; *Deut.* 16:1-3). This catalogue of compliance with the Law is especially significant in view of the richly symbolic style of *Luke* 1-2. Each incident is representative of many such deeds.

Before drawing any conclusions about the Virgin Mary, we want to attend to Paul's attitude towards the Law. His devotedness to the Law was not the serene, prayerful spirit of Mary but the fierce, fighting attitude of a soldier. Before a seething mob of Jews at the Jerusalem temple, Paul openly and unashamedly confessed his attachment to Mosaic traditions. This was an occasion, if there ever was one in anybody's life, for tact, diplomacy and, perhaps, compromise. True, Paul first quieted the contentious mood of the rioters, by speaking to them in their native Aramaic.<sup>7</sup> Eventually, when Paul announced that his divine mission was to preach to the Gentiles, those hated *gōjim*, the fury of the mob was unleashed. Before that moment of panic convulsed the crowd, Paul had declared:

I am a Jew, and I was born at Tarsus, in Cilicia, but was brought up here in this city, a pupil of Gamaliel, and instructed according to the strict acceptance of the Law of our fathers. I was zealous for the Law just as all of you are today (*Acts* 22:3).

We remember Paul's other militant words, written to his beloved Philippians. Although this letter, for the most part, breathes a free spirit of joy, still, the subject matter of the Law always made Paul bristle and attack. The relaxed style of the first two chapters at once hardens into vituperation, when Paul handles the problem of the law. He begins fiercely: "Beware the dogs!" He harshly refers to circumcision as a "mutilation" (cf. *Gal.* 5:12). He then challenges the Christian Judaizers with these words:

If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, yet more may I: circumcised the eighth day, of the race of Israel, of the

<sup>7</sup> Aramaic seems to have been Paul's maternal tongue. Cf. *2 Cor.* 11:22; *Phil.* 3:5.

tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as regards the Law, a Pharisee; as regards zeal, a persecutor of the Church of God; as regards the justice of the Law, leading a blameless life (*Phil.* 3:4-6).

These statements show how Paul the Christian could use his knowledge of the Law and his training in rabbinical method to reject the Law and defeat the rabbis. This fact has led some scholars to conclude that before his conversion Paul was never much of a Jew. His acquaintance with Jewry, they claim, was through the "colder, less intimate, less happy... and more pessimistic" form in the diaspora.<sup>8</sup> Such writers as Holtzmann, Morgan, Bousset, Reitzenstein and Montefiore have defended in one way or another the overwhelming Hellenistic influence upon Paul. Other scholars, however, like W. D. Davies and Joseph Bonsirven, S.J., have demonstrated convincingly that "Paul is grounded in an essentially Rabbinic world of thought, that the Apostle was, in short, a Rabbi become Christian and was therefore primarily governed both in life and thought by Pharisaic concepts. . . ."<sup>9</sup>

Saul the Jew did not overlook a single jot or tittle of the Law. If he had, then Paul the Christian might have concluded that at least *some* parts of the Law might be necessary for Christian sanctification. Paul allows for no exception. After detailing his former adherence to the Law, he says about it: "I count everything sheer loss, . . . [as] so much garbage, for the sake of gaining Christ and finding myself incorporate in him, with no righteousness of my own, no legal rectitude" (*Phil.* 3:8-9).<sup>9a</sup> From his own, blind subservience to the Law, Paul developed a compulsion to save others from his won frustration. He did not want others to seek redemption in a system which can do no more than point up one's weakness and sinfulness. No apostolic

<sup>8</sup> C. G. Montefiore, *Judaism and St. Paul* (London, 1914) 93, quoted by W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism. Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology* (London, 1958) 1.

<sup>9</sup> W. D. Davies, *op. cit.*, 16.

<sup>9a</sup> Tr. of *New English Bible* (Oxford University Press-Cambridge University Press, 1961).



writer, therefore, has stated more frequently and more emphatically than Paul that man is not justified by works but by faith. This phenomenon is not to be explained away by a supposed over-hellenization or ignorance of the true dignity of the Law. Saul the Jew had surpassed all his fellow Jewish Christians in scrupulously complying with the Law.

We can draw some conclusions, contrasting the attitude towards the Mosaic Law in the Blessed Virgin Mary with that in the Apostle Paul. The Jewish maiden, Mary of Nazareth, seems to have been more prayerful and thoughtful than the Rabbi, Saul of Tarsus. Mary plumbed more deeply into the true beauty and saving power of the Mosaic Law. Saul had remained too persistently on the upper level of external fulfillment and had exhausted himself with memorizing and observing the innumerable interpretations of the rabbis.<sup>10</sup> At the time of his conversion, Saul seems to have put aside the Law with a great sigh of relief. He honestly admits its dignity and its helpfulness; "the Law," he states, "has been our tutor in Christ" (*Gal.* 3:24). Inevitably Paul proceeds to add some such statement as this one: "Now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor" (*Gal.* 3:25).

The Law, which prepared Paul for the revelation of Christ, was not the mild Deuteronomic teacher but the stern task-master of Leviticus. Paul's conversion amounted to a violent revolution for freedom. He threw the Law aside and was ever after on the point of explosion whenever a converted Jew wanted to re-introduce Mosaic demands in Christian life. In rebuttal, Paul employed the rabbinical style of argumentation, and so he was able to use the Law to argue against the Law.

Mary, so it seems, lived peacefully within the Deuteronomic spirit of the Law. We can epitomize Mary's entire life with

<sup>10</sup> This statement must not be overdrawn. Paul had been instructed by Gamaliel (*Acts* 22:3), a prominent rabbi and member of the Sanhedrin, who showed himself prudent, brave and honest in his plea for the apostles Peter and John (*Acts* 5:34-39). Students from time immemorial have been known to be overzealous for the cause of their master!

the gospel remark about her presentation of Jesus in the temple and "their [days of] purification":<sup>11</sup> "they . . . fulfilled all things as prescribed in the Law of the Lord" (*Luke* 2:39).

After the resurrection of Jesus and the descent of the Holy Spirit, Mary remained at Jerusalem, living with the Apostle John, and with him and the other apostles conscientiously observing the Mosaic Law (*Acts* 2:46; 3:1, 11; 5:42). Many valid reasons can be advanced to explain the attachment of the very first Christians to the Mosaic Law and the rabbinical practice. We certainly must include among those reasons the persuasive presence of Mary, who, as the perfect daughter of Israel, herself prepared for the coming of the Messiah by a God-minded obedience to the Law.

To sum up quickly, Paul was prepared to accept Jesus as the Messiah by a forceful rejection of the Law which he knew exhaustively and observed meticulously. Mary, through the prayerful and grateful observance of the same Law, felt no need to throw off what had always been a source of strength and direction. In Mary's case the Law prepared for the moment of justification differently than it did in Paul's life.

## *2. The Presence of Jesus, the Revelation of a Glorious, Messianic Renewal*

We enter the second period in the justification or Christian transformation of the Apostle Paul and the Blessed Virgin Mary. We will first observe the attitude and conviction of St. Paul. From his fuller self-manifestation we can appreciate the mysterious disposition of Mary's life.

<sup>11</sup> R. Laurentin, *op. cit.*, 90, describes *Luke* 2:22-35 as "un passage mystérieux." The Greek reading "*their* purification" is firmly attested by manuscripts; it closely unites Mary's purification with Jesus' presentation. In fact, Mary's act proclaims the purification of all men; she has carried the Messiah to the Jerusalem temple where the Scriptures expected the promises to be fulfilled (*Is.* 2:2-4; *Soph.* 3:14-20; *Ez.* 40-48; *Zach.* 12-14). Cf. A. Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (8th ed., New York, 1907) 195, fn. 1; C. C. Torrey, *The Four Gospels* (London, 1933) 303.

The First and Second Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians (A.D. 52) provide an observation point for looking back on Paul's first sixteen years as a Christian. These early Christian years were spent, partly in a silent desert-retreat<sup>12</sup> (*Gal.* 1:17-18), partly in evangelical work around Damascus and Tarsus (*Acts* 9:22; *Gal.* 1:17-18; *Acts* 11:25) and a little later, upon Barnabas' insistence, at the central city of Antioch (*Acts* 11:25), partly in two missionary journeys through Asia Minor. First and Second Thessalonians expose features of Christian spirituality most astonishing and also rather uncongenial to present-day Christians—the almost total pre-occupation with the Second Coming of Jesus.

Expectation of the Second Coming may seem to us a strange and steril system of spirituality. Paul summarized this key doctrine of Christian life with these words: "to await from heaven Jesus, his Son, whom he raised from the dead, who is ever delivering us from the wrath to come" (*1 Thess.* 1:10). It must be admitted, however, that this spirituality was dynamic and productive. It sent the Twelve and the other Christian apostles into a world-wide undertaking. Everywhere they announced themselves as witnesses of the resurrected Jesus.<sup>13</sup> Such a message of salvation assured all men that they too would equally witness the same vision and even share the same glorious condition. They would rise from the dead, or if still alive at the Second Coming, they would be physically transformed.

This style of preaching fired men with hope beyond the

<sup>12</sup> O. Cullmann discussed whether or not Paul could have met members of the Qumran sect while he was at Damascus or in the desert-retreat. Be this as it may, the literary and doctrinal contacts between Paul and the Qumran literature are frequent and important. A select bibliography of this question is given by W. H. Brownlee, *The Meaning of the Qumrân Scrolls for the Bible* (New York, 1964) 122, fn. 45.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *Acts* 2:32; 3:15; 5:32; 10:39. Paul ended his sermon at Athens with this same doctrine, assuring the sophisticated Athenians that God "has guaranteed [Jesus] to all by raising him from the dead" (*Acts* 17:31). Cf. C. Pfeiffer, *The Risen Christ and the Christian*, in *Wbp* 34 (1960) 326-330.

horizon of all existing human expectation. This supernatural ambition of hope was quickened with an immediacy which expected "the day of the Lord . . . to come as a thief in the night, . . . as birth pangs upon her who is with child" (1 *Thess.* 5:2-3). Any moment—who can tell "when"?—the glorious Lord will be present. This was the way in which He appeared during the forty days after the resurrection; and as the first preachers announced the gospel, they could never shake off the stunned effect of these apparitions.

Sixteen years earlier, Paul had been visited by the risen Christ on the road to Damascus, and ever after he preached in a style similar to his brother-apostles. Paul knew Christ, as he wrote to the Philippians, "in the power of his resurrection" (*Phil.* 3:10).<sup>14</sup>

Paul may even have been overly zealous and too enthusiastic. True, in Second Thessalonians he corrected the abuses of an excessive apocalypticism. He urged his converts "not to be hastily shaken from your right mind, nor terrified, as though the day of the Lord were near at hand" (2 *Thess.* 2:2). A few of the Thessalonians had even quit their jobs, so as to be right on hand for the *parousia* of the Lord. Paul gave orders concerning these men: "with quietness they [are to] work and eat their own bread" (2 *Thess.* 3:12). The fact remains, however, it was Paul's preaching which upset these people!

Paul's doctrine of justification, during this first period, was dominated by the *parousia* or Second Coming.<sup>15</sup> His preaching pulsed with overbounding hopes and swift fulfillment. It also included another element: tribulation. Paul has not yet developed his consoling doctrine of "fellowship in his sufferings" (*Phil.* 3:10), but he repeatedly refers to tribulation in the two letters to the Thessalonians.<sup>16</sup> Like many Jews of his day, Paul

<sup>14</sup> The epistle to the Philippians comes from a period still later than 1-2 *Thess.* The impression of the risen Christ was still paramount.

<sup>15</sup> 1 *Thess.* 1:3, 10; 3:13; 5:1-10.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. B. M. Ahern, *The Fellowship of his Sufferings*, in *CBQ* 22 (1960)

saw these sorrows as part of the eschatological battle of the final age.<sup>17</sup>

The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Jewish literature of this period expected a mortal struggle between good and evil and then a definitive and everlasting victory for the forces of God. Paul, of course, envisions this struggle in a Christian setting: trials of the Christian life continue the *thlipsis* which Jesus endured before His own triumphant resurrection. Paul's language in 1-2 *Thess.*, however, reveals but little perception of interior agony. The apostle is more preoccupied with external warfare. Typical of Paul's thought during this first period is this statement from Second Thessalonians:

... We boast of you in all the churches for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and the tribulations that you are enduring. In this there is a proof of the just judgment of God counting you worthy of the kingdom of God, for which also you suffer. Indeed, it is just on the part of God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give you who are afflicted rest with us at the revelation of the Lord Jesus, who will come from heaven with the angels of his power, in flaming fire, to inflict punishment on those who do not know God, and who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These will be punished with eternal ruin, ... when on that day he shall come to be glorified in his saints (2 *Thess.* 1:4-10).

Paul, therefore, in the first period of his apostolic endeavor, saw Christian life orientated towards the *parousia* of the Risen Christ. His preaching charged men with impatient hope for the immediate coming of the Savior. Their trials belonged to the eschatological throes, giving birth to the full messianic victory.

2-6; in a simplified form in *New Horizons*, 108-112; D. M. Stanley, *Christ's Resurrection in Pauline Soteriology*, 81-93.

<sup>17</sup> World-wide struggle was expected in the Jewish apocalyptic literature. One of the important scrolls found at Qumran is entitled, *War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness*. For a comprehensive study, see D. S. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia, 1964).

We now ask whether or not the Blessed Virgin Mary's first steps in Christian justification were similar to Paul's. What was her immediate reaction to angelic revelation of the messianic Savior?

At this juncture many open questions bedevil our steps! Did the events surrounding Mary's first encounter with messianic fulfillment happen just as they are described in Luke, chapters 1-2? Did Mary actually compose that account? I think that a negative answer must be attached to each of these questions.<sup>18</sup> For our purposes here we will presume that the first two chapters of Luke's gospel developed among a circle of Johannine disciples; ultimately, however, they go back to Mary for their basic or initial data. Mary must have volunteered these details very early in the life of the Church, because the chapters reflect a peaceful community of Jewish Christians living during the early Pentecostal days. Can we look even more deeply into Luke's infancy narrative and isolate Mary's impressions during the first years after the Annunciation?<sup>19</sup> Yes, I think we can, if we first remove from these chapters any ideas of an organized church, distinct from Jewry, with its own liturgy<sup>20</sup> and special beliefs. One of these beliefs, incompatible with pre-Pentecostal ideas, was the one which held that God had made Jesus not only the Messiah but also the *kurios* or *Yahweh* (Acts 2:36). In other words, before the gift of the Spirit on Pentecost, it was enough that Jesus be recognized as the wondrous Messiah. We prefer to leave outside of this discussion the moot point of Mary's knowledge of the divinity of her unborn child.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>18</sup> An opinion is expressed in the second edition of the *Gospel of Saint Luke* (New Testament Reading Guide, n. 3; 2nd ed., Collegeville, Minn., 1964) 12-17, 19-39.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 12-15.

<sup>20</sup> The removal of liturgical elements would excise the text of the *Magnificat* (1:46-55) and the *Benedictus* (1:68-79).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. R. Kugelman, *The Object of Mary's Consent in the Annunciation*, in *MS* 11 (1960) 60-84.

From the moment of the Annunciation, Mary was impressed with the conviction that Jesus was the promised Messiah of the line of David. Her child, Mary was convinced, would inevitably launch an eschatological struggle,<sup>22</sup> whose outcome would be a mighty victory and world transformation. Three features, then—messiahship; eschatological war; cosmic victory<sup>23</sup>—characterize Mary's religious orientation, as they did Paul's after the first meeting with Jesus Christ. We must inquire what each meant for Mary.

God asked Mary at the Annunciation if she would consent to be the Mother of the royal, Davidic Messiah, of a child who would inherit "the throne of David his father" and rule an everlasting kingdom (*Luke* 1:32-33). God assured Mary that in the person of this child He, Yahweh, would rule over His people as He had once done through David and Solomon. Only now God intends the king's power to be supreme over a world-wide domain. Unlike all preceding Davidic kings, this child would not siphon the energy of divine life into selfish, ambitious schemes. He would always follow His heavenly father's will (*Luke* 3:22; 8:21; 10:22), even at the price of humiliating temptation (*Luke* 4:1-13) and agonizing death (*Luke* 9:44-45; 22:42). He would be truly and totally "the Son of the Most High," for He will expend His energies communicating and mediating divine life from the Most High God to the chosen people. More than anyone else, therefore, He Himself will abound with the energizing, pulsing might of divinity, because the divine life of all people would reside corporately within Himself.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *Luke* 12:49-53.

<sup>23</sup> Only in the third and last period of Paul's life, witnessed to by Colossians and Ephesians, does the apostle elaborate upon cosmic transformation of the world.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Th. De Kruijf, *Der Sohn des Lebendigen Gottes* (Analecta Biblica 16; Rome, 1962) 1-40, especially p. 10-13, 15-17; J. L. McKenzie, *Royal Messianism*, in *CBQ* 19 (1957) 25-52; J. de Fraine, *L'aspect religieux de la royauté israélite* (Analecta Biblica 3; Rome, 1954); *Son*

It is impossible to compute the measure of joy in Mary's heart when God assured her that the Davidic Messiah was about to be born. Jesus Himself caught something of her ecstatic wonder when He declared to the people: "Many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and they have not seen it; and to hear what you hear, and they have not heard it" (*Luke* 10:24; cf. *1 Pet.* 1:10-12). If we today could adequately appraise the shock of such an announcement—that the Messiah has finally come—we would not be impelled to neglect that truth and at once to bring up another question: "Did Mary also know Him to be divine, the consubstantial Son of God the Father?"

Very delicately the Scriptures describe the impression left upon Mary by the angelic salutation: she kept pondering what this message might mean (*Luke* 1:29). The Greek word, *dialogizomai*, means to harbor thoughts and to reflect upon them seriously.<sup>25</sup> Another Greek form, in 2:19, *sumballousa en te kardia autes* (pondering in her heart), connotes analysis, examination, meditation, contemplation.<sup>26</sup> While *en te kardia* acknowledges a deeply religious mood, *sumballo* expresses vigorous involvement. Literally, the word means, "to throw together"; in the intellectual sphere, it can denote quarreling, or, in Mary's case, intense, honest investigation of every aspect and possibility. She listened respectfully to everyone and pondered their words carefully, be the speaker her own Son, heavenly visitors, temple personnel, country shepherds. These people spoke consistently of messianic fulfillment.

Mary realized that the hopes and the promises of endless generations converged upon this moment, or, better, upon this child. She also perceived that a new life lay ahead for her and for all the world.

and Saviour, *The Divinity of Jesus Christ in the Scriptures* (Baltimore, 1960).

<sup>25</sup> Cf. W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (University of Chicago Press, 1957) 185.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 785.



This new life meant messianic victory for the poor and the lowly, especially for the lowliest of them, herself. While Paul expected a sudden and imminent *parousia*, Mary was content to wait upon God silently and prayerfully (cf. *Is.* 30:15, 18). While the difference is not to be over-emphasized, Mary's reaction to the revelation of the Messiah was more reflective than Paul's.

Another salient feature, in the early messianic consciousness of Paul and the Blessed Virgin Mary, is the realization of conflict and battle. While Paul spoke in terms of eschatological *thlipsis*, Mary's trials swept deeply and exhaustively through her soul. What touched the central nerve of her soul and sent her whole being reeling under its terrifying impact was the divine request, asking her to be the mother of the Messiah. God did not command her; a divine order would have shielded her from much anguish. God asked her in such a way, that she must make the decision freely! In the few moments—or, if you wish, in the few days—when Mary pondered this request, she must have felt her soul torn, convulsed, pulled, tempted, elated, afraid. No one can ever begin to appreciate adequately the travail of Mary's soul, closer than anyone else's to experiencing Jesus' temptation in the desert and agony in the garden. We can accommodate to Mary what the Epistle to the Hebrews wrote about Jesus's agony: "with loud cries and tears, [he] offered up prayers and supplications, . . . and was heard because of his humble submission" (*Heb.* 5:7).<sup>27</sup>

In order to value, however distantly, the decision expected of Mary and the soul-racking agony which the decision entailed, each one of us can inquire of himself how he would respond, if *asked* by God whether or not he would consent to be the

<sup>27</sup> A. E. Kenny, *Transfiguration and Agony in the Garden*, in *CBQ* 19 (1957) 444-452, compares the account of the agony in the garden with the Lord's prayer, and indirectly shows that the agony scene was told as an instruction for our imitation.

parent of the Messiah.<sup>28</sup> No individual vocation<sup>29</sup> nor national decision of peace or war<sup>30</sup> demanded such a toll of agony and exhaustion, as the answer awaited from Mary at the moment of the Annunciation.

What the aged Simeon is reported to have said to Mary could have been read within her eyes and upon the lines of her face:

Behold, this child is destined for the fall and for the rise of many in Israel, and for a sign that shall be contradicted. And thy own soul a sword shall pierce, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed (Luke 2:34-35).<sup>31</sup>

The messianic agony, accompanying the annunciation and the infancy of Jesus, was only the beginning. The process of justification has already revealed a ready willingness and a super-heroic courage, but Mary could not foresee what more excruciating torments lay in the future.

The third, important aspect of St. Paul's and the Virgin Mary's justification is their realization that Jesus' messianic presence had cosmic significance. The Old Testament is too

<sup>28</sup> X. Léon-Dufour, *Le juste Joseph*, in *NRT* 81 (1959) 225-231; id., *L'annonce à Joseph*, in *Mélanges Bibliques dédiés en l'honneur de André Robert* (Paris, 1957) 390-397, explains the trial of St. Joseph in this same way. Joseph, knowing that Mary was mothering the Messiah, decided to disappear. He would willingly bear the disgrace of being considered a deserter, so that God could accomplish His work without any hindrance from himself. He was overwhelmed by the prospects of being the father and head of a household where the Messiah lived as a child.

<sup>29</sup> We think of the question put to a cardinal when his papal election is just announced and a reply is momentarily expected.

<sup>30</sup> We think of President Kennedy's decision at the time of the Cuban missile crisis.

<sup>31</sup> The exact meaning of this text cannot be determined, as its long, divergent history of interpretation testifies. See A. de Groot, *Die Schmerzhafte Mutter und Gefährdin des göttlichen Erlösers in der Weissagung Siméons* (Lk. 2,35). *Eine biblisch-theologische Studie* (Kaldenkirchen, 1956); R. Luarentin, *op. cit.*, 89-91; A. Feuillet, *L'épreuve prédite à Marie par le vieillard Simeon* (Luc II, 35d), in *A la Rencontre de Dieu. Mémorial Albert Gelin* (Le Puy, 1961) 243-263.

rich in the doctrine of universal salvation, for a devout Jew to overlook it. While Paul linked the doctrine of world redemption with the *parousia*, Mary's understanding is not as clearly stated. Many statements can be drawn from the Infancy Narrative, of salvation's reaching the poor, the ignorant and the undesirables.<sup>32</sup> These people, only a half-step removed from the status of the Gentiles, are assured salvation through the newly born Messiah. It is difficult to decide, however, exactly how the account of these episodes in Luke's infancy gospel reflects Mary's first appreciation.<sup>33</sup> They might have resulted from later reflection and theologizing.

We will now conclude this second major section. The first part investigated the preparatory role of the Mosaic Law in the conversion and messianic orientation of each saint; Paul, we saw, reacted vigorously against the Law; Mary remained prayerfully within it. The second part concluded: first, to the profound change accomplished by the announcement of Jesus' messiahship; then, to the messianic agony or *thlipsis* experienced by both; finally, but only very faintly in Mary's case, to the world-wide repercussions of Jesus' presence as Messiah.

### 3. *A Deepening Sense of Salvation Through the Experience of the Cross*

We now want to watch the initial messianic revelation expand and develop within the lives of St. Paul and the Virgin Mary. We will follow the same pattern of discussion maintained up till now: first, determining St. Paul's reaction from the rich evidence of his letters; then, from that vantage point, illuminating the mystery of Mary's growth in justification.

<sup>32</sup> It is still another question, how the nations would be united to Israel and thus be saved. God's interest in all men is evidenced in the Abrahamic promises (*Gen.* 12:1-3), in the preaching of the first prophet, Amos (*Am.* 1:3-2:3), in the time of the exile (*Is.* 40:5; 42:6), and after the exile (*Jona*).

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Mary's *Magnificat* (1:46-55), the despised shepherds (2:8-17), Simeon and Anna, only ones to recognize Jesus at the temple (2:25-38).

Paul is in the midst of his third missionary journey (Spring A.D. 53 to Spring A.D. 58). During these years Paul the apostle traveled widely, but Paul the mystic penetrated even more deeply into the mystery of justification in Christ. The disappointments of the Corinthian apostolate and the bitter controversies in the Galatian Church forced Paul to rethink and reformulate his message of salvation. We would say, in modern terminology, that he tore up his sermons and started all over again. A striking innovation in style and content is apparent at once in the epistles of this second period: First and Second Corinthians, Philippians,<sup>34</sup> Galatians and Romans. Paul's major concern over the *Parousia*-Resurrection is now directed towards the Passion-Resurrection. Paul, who had once sought to "comfort" the Thessalonians with the announcement of the imminent coming of the Lord (1 *Thess.* 4:18) is now proclaiming that Christ Jesus is already present. Christ abides as the one source of strength for Christians who would otherwise collapse beneath the load of suffering and frustration.

In this new period we will discern these points of contact between St. Paul and the Virgin Mary: first, a deepening sense of justification through the experience of the cross; second, salvation not by works nor by the Law but by faith; third, salvation's triumph within the poor and lowly.

Earlier to the Thessalonians, Paul admitted that spiritual growth is possible even under a storm of suffering (cf. 1 *Thess.* 1:3, 6; 2 *Thess.* 1:4-5). Now, in writing to the Corinthians, he declares that sorrow and weakness produce the most favorable climate for the activity of God's saving power.<sup>35</sup> Paul had to be cast down by abuse, to be stripped by ridicule, and to be

<sup>34</sup> The letter to the Philippians is generally placed during or slightly after Paul's captivity at Ephesus. Cf. P. Bonnard, *L'Épître aux Philippiens* (Paris, 1950); P. Benoit, *Les Épîtres de S. Paul aux Philippiens...* (Paris, 1949); for a succinct summary of the arguments, see Kathryn Sullivan, *St. Paul's Epistles to the Philippians...* (New Testament Reading Guide, n. 9, Collegeville, Minn., 1960) 7-9.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. B. M. Ahern, *New Horizons*, 113-135; *CBQ* 22 (1960) 6-25.

left half-dead, as an unwanted upstart, before he could fully realize that Jesus alone is Lord and Savior. "It pleased God," he wrote, "by the foolishness of our preaching, to save those who believe. . . . But the foolish things of the world has God chosen, . . . and the weak things, . . . and the base things, . . . and the despised, . . . and the things that are not, to bring to naught the things that are; lest any flesh should pride itself before him" (1 *Cor.* 1:21, 27-29).

Somehow or other, Paul had to see his treasured dreams and finest ambitions explode, before he could ever have written those words. The ink was mixed from the tears of his frustrations, and the strength to write was gathered from his exhaustion. He felt close to death, if not physically, certainly emotionally, in these lines to the Corinthians: "We were crushed beyond measure—beyond our strength—so that we despaired even of life. We have been carrying within our very selves our death sentence; in order that we may not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead. He it is who delivered us and will deliver us from such deadly perils" (2 *Cor.* 1:8-10). These words tell us the source of Paul's doctrine on the resurrection; he himself had to be raised from the death of despair through the spirit of Jesus, before he could realize the justifying force of Jesus' own resurrection.

It was in the context of the apostolate that Paul wrote still other lines: "We preach not ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord. . . . We carry this treasure [this saving truth of salvation in Jesus Christ] in vessels of clay, to show that the abundance of the power is God's and not ours. In all things we suffer tribulation, but we are not distressed; we are sore pressed, but we are not destitute; we endure persecution, but we are not forsaken; we are cast down, but we do not perish; always bearing about in our body the dying of Jesus, so that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our bodily frame. For we the living are constantly being handed over to death for Jesus' sake,

that the life of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor. 4:5, 7-11).

Human activity always reveals a person's weakness. Strange as it sounds, the most glaring faults show up in the exercise of a person's most brilliant talents. A good organizer tends to over-organize; an eloquent speaker will be tempted to sway others more by stylistic flourishes than by persuasive reasoning, and he himself will be too easily moved by emotional issues. The apostolate forced Paul to recognize the clay out of which he was formed. This admission would have driven him to suicide—Paul actually confesses that fact<sup>36</sup>—were it not for a sustaining power from within. *He believed* that Jesus Christ must be present at the heart of his life, personally loving him and energetically vitalizing him. To the extent that apostolic activity lay bare his earthly clay and struck devastating blows at it, Paul began to recognize by faith the wondrous manifestation<sup>37</sup> of Jesus within his mortal frame.

Another and, perhaps, truer way of viewing this phenomenon in Paul is to see the power of Christ's life gradually extending outward through Paul's entire person and into all his apostolic undertakings. It was Jesus who impelled him to preach, and to the extent that Paul allowed this inner life to dominate his activity and to inspire his message, he encountered the hostility of his own and other people's weaknesses: selfishness, ambition, prejudice, discouragement and impulsiveness. A bright light reveals cobwebs, and the brighter the light the darker the shadows! The power of the resurrection is leading Paul to the *parousia* by first bringing him through the darkness of the cross.

A second, very important feature of Paul's spirituality at this second stage of his spiritual development is his unequivocal

<sup>36</sup> Cf. 2 Cor. 1:8f.

<sup>37</sup> The Greek word, used twice in 2 Cor. 4:10-11, is the aorist passive of *phaneroō*, a derivative of *phainō*. The latter word is usually associated with extraordinary, that is, supernatural acts of redemption.

stand on justification by faith. The opposition from Christian converts from Palestinian Judaism triggered this violent struggle in Paul's life and—thanks be to God—forced Paul to a full discussion in the epistle to the Romans.

Paul, we must admit, meant exactly what he said: "The just man lives by faith" (*Gal.* 3:77; *Rom.* 1:17). This question from the prophet Habakkuk provides the theme for the entire epistle to the Romans. Paul maintains that there is one and only one source of life, Christ Jesus. The beginning of life, all the way to its fulfillment, flows from Jesus. "It is now no longer I that live, Christ lives in me. The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself up for me" (*Gal.* 2:20).

Paul does not overlook the necessity of good works performed by the believer. He beautifully enumerates the fruits of the Spirit in the epistles to the Galatians and the Romans. (cf. *Gal.* 5:16ff; *Rom.* 8:5ff). This same "Spirit which raised Jesus from the dead will bring to life your mortal bodies." Through a long, painful process Paul realized that when one recognizes the Spirit as the single source of all life, then the Christian will be completely open to God's full power. His aching and agonizing need will cry out to God to come and save him. When the need is total, then the redemption is complete.

Mary, like St. Paul, must progress in the way of justification: first, through sorrow; second, by faith. Sorrow raises the problem of faith; faith is strengthened by struggling with this problem. One thus confesses, with an ever stronger conviction, that life and salvation are through Jesus alone.

Mary's agony over the decision to be the mother of the Messiah has already been discussed. Whether this agony lasted but a moment or was extended over a longer period of time must remain an open question; and, in fact, has only very little bearing upon our discussion. The impact upon Mary's soul was overwhelming! The experience opened Mary's heart

to such a massive wave of divine power that she must have felt herself—by contrast—to be the lowliest of the lowly. Her initial reaction to the angel now acquires more genuine meaning for us; she was speechless. The angel further explained the will of God, and Mary, speaking for the first time, reveals her anguished astonishment: "But how can this be?"

Mary was being pulled painfully in what seemed to be totally different directions! God wanted perpetual virginity,<sup>38</sup> and now the divine message asks her to become a mother. The question must have been at least half formed: "Exactly what does God want of me?" An earlier trial, which she had considered settled once for all times, was again revived. Mary must have had to discuss this matter of her virginity with Joseph, and despite the goodness of the man, the discussion must have cost Mary dearly. The mere fact of revealing such personal and intimate secrets would inflict great pain on one as reticent and reserved as Mary was. Mary was lost for words, totally emptied of a reply, lost in the mystery. This agony had sent her mind beyond the realm of rationalization and articulation, into the silent enclosure of the divine. When she spoke, her words revealed a faith—a complete consecration and surrender to God her Savior—which had become ever more intense with each new trial. At first, she could only ask a question of baffling wonder: "But how can this be, since I do not know man?" The reply from God appealed to still greater faith, "Nothing is impossible with God." Mary's response expressed her humble resignation before a God who can do all things: "Be it done to me according to thy word." The agony of human inability prepared for this answer of faith.

God continually treated Mary in this way. Every indication in the gospels reveals Mary to be stunned and baffled, pained and—it even seems—rejected. Thus was she learning ever more completely the power and the will of God.

<sup>38</sup>Cf. N. M. Flanagan, *Our Lady's Vow of Virginity*, in *MS* 7 (1956) 103-121.



The painful occasions are very well known: the perplexing words of Simeon about a sign to be contradicted; Jesus' reply in the temple about being involved in His Father's business. In these two incidents, as well as in all others in the gospels, Jesus is leading Mary away from the privileges of her physical maternity and inducing an awareness of a spiritual maternity. Mary would not have realized at first the full significance of this special vocation. Only when the Christian community was formed at Pentecost and passed from an eschatological to a more ecclesial group, did Mary see her place as mother within the Church.

Mary had to be patient. Only with time would she perceive the scope of her vocation. We, too, must show reserve in feeling that we understand what this title means: Mary, Mother of the Church. We will appreciate its import, as Mary did, in so far as God purifies us of over-sentimentality and rigid certainty.

In the temple Mary addressed Jesus as "Son!" and thus expressed her maternal rights as well as Joseph's fatherly privileges over the twelve year old boy. She said: "Son, why have you done this to us?"<sup>39</sup> *Your father and I* have been searching for you with great anxiety." In reply, Jesus challenges their right to question Him at all. He directs the question back at them: "How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be about my father's business?" or, as some would translate it, "in my Father's house." Jesus equivalently says: "Wait. Who is my father and my mother? To whom do you think that I belong?"

In the very moment when Mary refers to Joseph as His father, Jesus names someone else as father. The reply is very difficult to translate, more baffling to explain. Does Jesus refer to "my father's business" or to "my father's house" or what? The puzzling condition of His words best reveals the sorrowing

<sup>39</sup> The *New English Bible* (Oxford University Press-Cambridge University Press, 1961) reads: "My son, why have you treated us like this?"

state of Mary's soul. The gospel plainly admits: "They did not understand." Poignant sorrow is hidden in that avowal. To know is to possess, and who wants to possess their children more than their parents? To be ignorant of one's own children is to admit a separation of heart and mind. Mary did not understand her Child.

Each gospel incident about Mary, whether in the synoptics or in John, sharpens this sense of separation. When Mary requests help from Jesus at Cana, Jesus asks her: "What to me and to you, woman?" Jesus again seems to question her maternal rights over Him; He wants Mary's interest to reach beyond a woman's concern over refreshments to the world-wide scope of divine redemption. To call her "woman" instead of "mother" was painful, but eventually it will lead Mary to a new role of maternity when the hour of the Church has dawned.

Another time, when a woman praised Mary for being the mother of such a kind and courageous person as Himself, Jesus seemed to say: "Now, wait. Who is my mother? And what makes her be my mother?" There is every reason to think that Mary heard about this reply. Again, God leads her through the cross of sorrow into a mystery of faith.

God, we think, is thus seen to be guiding Mary as he did Paul. Many details in each case are different, but the way of faith is basically the same. Just as Paul learned justification by faith through sorrows of his own apostolate, Mary learned it through the pain inflicted by Jesus' apostolate. Mary found happiness and peace with God—and that is holiness—not by the claims of her human motherhood—her works—but by the power of God working through Jesus in her, and through her in others. She came to know the person of her Son in the Church, through the separation which she suffered between herself and her Son.

### *Conclusion*

This study, comparing the process of justification in the

Virgin Mary and in St. Paul, must necessarily remain hypothetical, seldom reaching one hundred percent certitude. If literary bonds could be uncovered, establishing an influence of St. Paul upon Luke 1-2, then our conclusions could be elevated to a much more respectable position. In speaking of the mysterious, sanctifying presence of God in the soul of anyone, not to say of such a one as the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Paul, it may be over-bold ever to presume certitude. Our rationalizations, even when inspired and supported by faith, can never contain their supereminent sanctity.

We have attempted to cast light into the heart of Mary by means of the rather full self-manifestation of St. Paul. Each saint possessed the one spirit of God, and there would necessarily be a basic similarity.

In their pre-Christian, preparatory period as devout Jews, Mary and St. Paul were each intensely devoted to the Mosaic Law and the rabbinical interpretations. Paul, however, wore himself out with slavishly literal compliance. He left no law or prescription untried, and, therefore, found the entire law weak and imperfect. While Paul remained busy on the top level of external activity, Mary, on the contrary, kept the law prayerfully, according to its spirit. Perhaps, through her, Jesus and eventually the post-Pentecostal apostolic Church grew in a devoted loyalty to Deuteronomy and its interior approach towards law.

In the second major part of this study, we asked ourselves: how did the wondrous news that the Messiah has appeared effect Mary and St. Paul? For the Apostle of the Gentiles, as he tells us in 1-2 *Thess.*, the news meant that the eschatological age was at hand. What Christ had done for Paul, He will do for all men. Christ will come (the Greek word is *parousia*) and with a decisive battle conclude the present economy. Mary, again, reacted more interiorly and prayerfully. That she, the lowliest of God's handmaids, must freely consent to be the mother of the Messiah, brought great joy but also untold agony.

The *thlipsis* or tribulation in Mary's case was deep within her heart.

Finally, we attempted to trace the effect of Jesus' messianic presence and especially of His apostolic work upon Mary and St. Paul. Paul experienced repeated failure and frustration and, yet, felt the sustaining power of Christ's presence within himself and others. He now developed, in the Great Epistles (1-2 Cor., Gal., Rom., and Phil.), his doctrine of Christ's interior presence which he called the "Body of the Lord." Not by works but by faith in Jesus' presence was man justified; through a complete surrender to God's sanctifying power in Christ Jesus were the divine promises realized in the Church.

Mary, too, grew in the awareness of Christ's interior presence in all men. Jesus' apostolate made her gradually realize that her physical rights as mother (what might be termed her "work") must surrender to a spiritual motherhood. Christ was more than just her son; in some mysterious way He was all men. Mary's motherhood must have an important role in giving birth to this full Jesus Christ. Just as Jesus suffered and was tempted, even to the abandonment of His Father, Mary suffered and was tempted, and in the process of learning her role in the justification of all men, the power of justification was sanctifying her own person with great conformity to Jesus. In this last section we recognize, at least at a distance, the scriptural foundation for Mary's role as Mother of the Church.

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